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ABSTRACT

This document presents the process for obtaining certification for the position of early childhood centre administrator (ECCA) in Nova Scotia, Canada. Following an introduction describing the development of the process and its pilot testing, Chapter 1 of the document details the four-step process: (1) application, including training in the ECCA certification process and training to develop a professional portfolio; (2) examination, through the candidate's presentations of case study responses and case studies he or she has written; (3) validation, an assessment of the candidate's competence based on parent and staff perceptions and an evaluation of the program; and (4) recommendation, in which a report is developed and recommendations formulated by a validator, then presented to the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia. Chapter 2 of the document describes the process for collecting data to be used in developing standards for ECCAs. Two appendices contain the job specifications and the management areas grid for the ECCA position and the child care administrator credentialing model. (KB)

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Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification

Project Report
December 2000

Child Care Connection - Nova Scotia
In partnership with

certification council
of early childhood
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Project Report
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By E. Elaine Ferguson

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Because over ninety seven percent of practitioners in child care are female, the feminine pronouns are used.

The characters described in the examples are fictional.

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Background

The Early Childhood Centre Administrator (ECCA) Certification process began its development with a needs assessment funded by the Child Care Initiatives Fund of Health and Welfare Canada. With need and interest in the process established, the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia (CCECENS) gathered a group of administrators together to identify the competencies needed to be an administrator of an early childhood centre. Each of them gathered information from their own experience and review of literature on a specific area of competency, bringing it to the larger group for refinement. The CCECENS contracted with E. Elaine Ferguson of Child Care Connection NS to sort the data and draft a process to use in an administrator certification process. Mary Jane Hawkins worked with her in developing a process that used a case study approach to examining the competency of administrators. The first draft of the early childhood centre administrators management grid (Appendix A) was developed as part of the process.

The next step was to verify that the competencies in the management areas grid accurately reflected the depth and breadth of the role of the early childhood centre administrator. With funding from Child Care Visions Program of Human Resources Development Canada, an investigation into early childhood centre administrator credentialing in Canada was conducted by E. Elaine Ferguson of Child Care Connection NS (1995). This investigation consulted with Canadian child care organizations and early childhood studies training programs with a early childhood administrator credential. They reviewed the model (Appendix B), including the management areas grid. As a result of that investigation, the management areas grid was refined and verified. With the management areas grid verified nationally, the process for Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification was ready for testing.

The verification informed the process as to the specific areas in which early childhood centre administers required competency. What it didn't do was to define the competency criteria, i.e. what practice in relation to a competency area would rate as needing improvement, demonstrating basic competency, or demonstrating excellence. A pilot of the early childhood centre administrator certification process was launched in 1998 with funding from the Child Care Visions Program of Human Resources Development Canada. Built into that pilot was a means to collect information that will be used to develop standards of practice.

The process takes the candidates through a prior learning assessment, developing a learning plan, case study presentations, self, peer and validator evaluation, journal writing, and the development of materials which assist her in her work. Training is provided for each step in the process. The components of the process serve as tools for the candidate to reflect and acknowledge the practice skills she has acquired. They

document her process and facilitate planning to accomplish her growth. She gains confidence in her practice, learns from colleagues, and develops tools that will assist her in her practice.

The materials developed in the pilot to support the process of the Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification Process include: fifteen case studies; six training modules; three manuals – operations, case study and training; and a data base that collects the ratings, and records demographic data such as training, years of experience, etc. and completed components in the process.

Throughout the pilot, the process was continually evaluated and refined with feedback from candidates, training seminar participants, validators, meeting coordinators, steering committee members and the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of NS. The pilot provided the opportunity to refine the process and make it workable for the Certification Council and the ECCA candidates. As well, much information was collected with the rating process of each of the competencies in the management areas grid. The process that developed as a result of the pilot is one that examines the candidate's competency in depth; requires reflection of the part of the candidate, her peers and a validator; and can be continually improved and refined.

CHAPTER 1

Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification (ECCA) A Four-Step Process

Early Childhood Centre Administrator (ECCA) Certification is a four-step process, taking the candidate through application, evaluation, validation and recommendation. From application through to certification, early childhood centre administrator certification candidates are asked to reflect on their own growth and development; on their practice and on the contextual factors in which they practice. When the candidate is evaluating her peers, she is also asked to reflect upon her peer's practice. This expectation for reflection is fundamental to the certification process and is the catalyst which makes the process dynamic, useful and enriching.

Step 1: Application

The *Application* process begins with training in the ECCA certification process to acquaint the applicant in the expectations for her in being a candidate and for the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia (CCECENS) in the certification process. If the candidate decides to continue with the application, training is taken in Professional Portfolio Development. The applicant proceeds with the development of her portfolio, assisted by a workbook that she received in the portfolio development workshop. The portfolio is a record of the learning's she has accumulated over her life time which apply to her role as a early childhood centre administrator. She then does an assessment of the accomplishments relative to the management areas grid.

When completed, she submits the portfolio to the CCECENS for their review. This portfolio provides the CCECENS with a comprehensive overview of the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the applicant to use in their deliberations as the suitability of the applicant as a candidate. The CCECENS interviews the applicant and makes a decision to accept or reject the application.

Training Outcomes:

Orientation to Early Childhood Centre Administration Certification Process

- Be acquainted with the steps in the ECCA certification process, the roles of the participants and the CCECENS;
- Be acquainted with and have some degree of comfort in using the ECCA certification criteria, and understand it's role as the foundation of the ECCA certification process;
- Gain skill in reflective thinking and in applying that skill to journal writing and case studies.

Portfolio Development Workshop

- Participants will gain an understanding of the portfolio process for ECCA certification.
- Participants will begin work on a chronological record.
- Participants will draft a sample history paper of their professional experiences.
- Participants will analyze the learning that has derived from career experiences.
- Participants will write the outcomes of their own learning experiences.
- Participants will compare their own learning with the ECCA certification criteria.
- Participants will describe specific events in detail.
- Participants will begin to list sources of documentation to support the learning that has derived from their achievements.

Professional Portfolio:

The Chronological Record

1978	June	began working as a volunteer with preschool children at a day care centre in our community.
	Sept.	enrolled in a one-year Early Childhood Education program at St. Joseph's, Halifax.
1979	June	graduated with a certificate in Early Childhood Education.
1979	July	worked in a day care centre with children two to five years of age
1980	Jan.	attended a two-day conference in Halifax on early childhood education, went to seminars, workshops, a banquet, met many new people.
1980	Aug.	assigned to provide special assistance to a child at the centre who has cerebral palsy and who was three years old.
1981	Sept	worked as assistant director while during a six-month maternity leave period. ... etc.

History of Relevant Experiences:

Experience	Length of time	Description of Responsibilities, Learning Opportunities, Activities
Work experiences: 1. Daily responsibility for ensuring that personnel policies are followed	6 months	- staff are scheduled according to programand family requirements - dress code and sick leave policies are discussed and decided upon
2. Ensure relative input to strategic planning of program consistent philosophy	6 months	- salary levels are negotiated - expectations of staff for program planning and implementation are coordinated with -guidance and input is provided
Volunteer work: 1. Member of the Professional development committee of the association.	8 months	- planning workshops, 1 conference - how meetings operate - importance of child care as a career
2. Fund-raising to send member to conference	3 wks, 2 years in a row	- dealing with public - promoting the organization - managing money - record keeping

Writing Your History Section:

When my daughter, Laura, was three years old she began to attend the preschool component of the day care centre in our community. Her teacher asked me if I would be interested in volunteering some of my time to help with the children's program. I said that I would give it a try, but didn't know if I could be of any help. I volunteered two mornings a week during the summer program. I found that there was so much to learn about the way young children develop, that this volunteer work was also helping me in my parenting skills. I started by observing the way staff interacted with the children, and tried to be consistent with their approach. I felt very unsure at times about how to best handle certain situations. Questions about the children and their behaviour kept coming to mind, and I asked the teacher for some reading materials which would help me to understand the children better. I inquired about courses that were available and found out about the training program at IECEDS. I applied and was accepted to start in September 1979. My daughter could attend day care full-time while I participated in my studies.

For the next year I studied early childhood education. I had never imagined that there was so much to learn about children, their families, planning and preparing programs, and the operation of a child care centre. The faculty were so knowledgeable, and the staff at the laboratory school were excellent role models. They were very helpful in giving me ideas to make my work more effective. I also found that I had to be very organized at home and at school in order to study and raise my daughter. There were some difficult times, like when Laura came down with the chickenpox. We had to stay home for a week. I never thought that I would catch up in all the work that I was missing. A friend from class offered to bring home notes from classes, and one of the faculty gave me her home telephone number so that I could call if I needed help understanding the readings or doing the assignments. I remembered this help the day I walked across the stage to receive my diploma. I felt so proud of this accomplishment, but knew that there had been some very special people who made it possible.

Before graduating I had sent out several applications for positions in child care centres and family resource centres. I was interested mostly in working with children two to five years of age, but would also have considered infant/toddler and school-age children. I was offered work as a substitute to replace staff on vacation at the day care centre that my daughter attended. I enjoyed the work, but found that it was hard being called in the morning . . . .

Learning Outcomes/Competencies:

Description of Experience	Learning Outcomes	Supportive Documentation
Workshop on "How to run effective staff meetings"	Demonstrate the leadership skills necessary to run effective staff meetings. - solicit input on agenda - organize the meeting so that important items get enough discussion - encourage equal participation of all staff - bring new information - arrive at consensus - make decisions and decide on action	D3 - certificate of participation D4 - outline of workshop
Daily planning and program implementation	Co-ordinate planning with team members - ensure they have had time to observe and record children's interests, preferences, challenges. - schedule in support staff during planning meetings - review all plans and post for parents - check inventory or order supplies to support plans	D6 - Sample program planning guide D7 - Observation record and schedule D-8-Operating budget for program consumables

Describing Your Competence: In-depth Event Report

At a planned discussion amongst staff, concerns were raised about a particular child. For the last month, four year old Matthew had become very quiet, uninterested in most program activities, and preferred playing alone. We reviewed previous observation records that indicated that he was usually involved in active associative play with another child, Alec, and also enjoyed co-operative play with Stephanie and Noel. He was noted as interacting confidently with other children and showing enthusiasm for playing roles in dramatic play. Each of the staff brought forward their perspectives and interpretations of their observations. We listed the information that we had, and then began to brainstorm questions that we needed answers for in order to be supportive to Matthew. We agreed that it was important to discuss our concerns with Matthew's parents. On a few occasions staff had already mentioned to the parents that he seemed out of sorts. They said that he had seemed a bit tired lately, but had also been up later at night than he was

used to. Now that it has been a month, we agreed it would be important to discuss our observations with them and share any information that may be relevant to Matthew's feelings. We discussed the importance of trying to determine whether Matthew had experienced any problems with his friends; whether he was feeling physically healthy; if there was anything he was thinking about that made him feel sad or afraid. One staff, Donna, felt that she had a close relationship with Matthew and that he might trust her enough to share his feelings. As director, I agreed that I would meet with Matthew's parents. Two other staff agreed to assist Donna by continuing to keep running observations and staying after work on Thursdays to share our findings. I would also call the Public Health Nurse to ask her to drop by and to find out if there are any common illnesses circulating at this time. We would agree to meet in one week's time to review the information and to see if there is any change in Matthew's behaviour ... .

In Depth Event Report: the Essay

In my role, I have found that having good interpersonal communication skills are very important to being an effective administrator. I attended a workshop on interpersonal skills and found that I was much more aware of the importance of listening than I was before. In order for the child care centre to offer a high quality program, there must be open communication amongst child care practitioners, families, children and the community. My role is to facilitate opportunities for daily interaction between staff and parents to share information about their children. Parents are welcome to stay at times that are convenient for them. The more informed parents are about the children's program, the more likely that they may offer suggestions. Parents have said that they also enjoy parent meetings in the evening, perhaps two or three times a year where they have the opportunity to listen to a guest speaker and discuss their children with the staff.

Staff needs to have opportunities to discuss the program and the children and time to plan a program that will interest the children and enhance their development. Regular staff meetings and program planning meetings allow for this work. When working with staff in the program I support them and give them guidance through role modeling and discussion. I encourage them to take the lead in program activities such as small group times, creative activities, and mealtime. We work as a team to guide the children's play and behaviour throughout the day, and communicate regularly about the events of the day ... .

Step 2: Examination

The process for evaluating the candidates for ECCA administration certification is inclusive. It reflects the developmental process in the candidates, the complexity of the administrator's role, and the shared values of continuous learning and collegiality. It is sensitive to the ethical issues around confidentiality that would present themselves in a peer evaluation process of early childhood centre administrators. It is flexible so candidates can move in and out of the process in response to their needs.

The second step, *Examination*, includes two phases of evaluation of the candidate through her presentations of five case study responses and five case studies she has written herself. In each of the two phases, the candidates evaluate their own competency in addressing the case studies, as well as being evaluated by five peers and a validator. Initially, the candidates are given training in *Communication for Evaluation* to provide them with the skills needed to be effective in their evaluations. The training session, *Case Study Response*, introduces the candidates to the case study process and practice in presenting a case study response to their peers. Case studies are assigned to the candidate in the relationship areas of Staff, Families, Licensed Operator (Owners & Boards), Facility and Community of the management areas grid (Appendix B). Candidates prepare a response and present it to a group that includes five peers, a validator and meeting coordinator. Each person in the meeting rates the candidate's approach to the case study on three of the competencies within the relationship area that applies to the case study.

Throughout this phase, the candidate's facilitator mentors the candidate through the process, dialoguing back and forth on journal entries that have been assigned to the candidate. These entries are based on competencies that are not addressed in their assigned case study. The candidate reflects on the competency and relates it to her own experience and practice. The competencies in the journal entries are addressed in Phase B when the candidate writes five case studies.

Phase B includes training in writing *case study writing* and the *application of ethics*. The written case studies are evaluated as the case study responses in Phase A.

Throughout the *Examination* step in Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification, candidates are preparing their practice binders by gathering centre forms, policies, procedures, philosophy and the legal sanctions that affect their work into a binder.

Phase A — Case Study Response

Training Outcomes:

Case Study Response

- to understand the case study process and its usefulness to early childhood centre administrator certification
- to provide the necessary skills to read, analyze and respond to a case study
- to provide a comfort level in presenting a response to the case study review committee

Communication for Evaluation

- Have had experience with the early childhood centre administrator certification evaluation process, including the forms, dialogue, and written evaluation processes;
- Be able to evaluate, in both spoken and written formats, a candidate and oneself using the reflective techniques of suspending judgment, identifying assumptions, asking questions and listening.
- Recognize how personality type has an affect on communication and apply that learning to the steps in evaluation.

Case Study Response Example

Case Study LO1 : Increase in Fixed Expense: We Must Cut Staff
By E. Stelzer Rudick

The day care expands

The Friendly Faces day care began five years ago in a church basement. Since then, their reputation for quality and play-based educational service has resulted in increased enrolment and a substantial wait list. The owners believed that the time was right to look for a new and larger location to accommodate the rapidly expanding clientele. So, in January, they purchased a small home in the neighbourhood that, with renovations, would ultimately enable them to accommodate another 25 to 30 children. The owners anticipated that the day care would be ready in early May.

A government grant was secured for the down payment of the property but all renovations and maintenance of the facility had to come out of the day care's operating budget. The owners originally anticipated that mortgage payments would be about the same as the rental that was paid to the church. However, in order to meet municipal by-laws, renovation costs exceeded expectations and a larger mortgage had to be secured. The end result was larger than anticipated monthly payments.

The new day care was a renovated two-story house with a wonderful relaxed atmosphere and felt like home. The back yard would serve as an excellent outdoor play environment, and the day care could now accommodate more children than the small numbers served in the church. The main floor consisted of a small but functional kitchen, two small bathrooms – one for the adults and one for the children, one room for the infants with an adjacent sleeping room, a small room for the toddlers, and one double room for the three year old children. The upper floor consisted of a large double room for the four to five year old children, the

administrator's office, two double children's size bathrooms, and a spare room that would be completed in the future. The basement included an entrance from the garden, cubby spaces for coats and boots, a small bathroom, a staff lounge, a room for a washer and dryer, and two small storage rooms.

Sally Olson, the administrator of Friendly Faces Day Care, was the link between staff, parents, and the owners. She met weekly with the owners to discuss finances, enrolment, and other relevant issues. However, Sally had no knowledge of the financial problems that were looming. Her financial discussions were limited to planning and maintaining a budget for meals and snacks, working within an allotted budget for supplies, completing the payroll information, and depositing parent fees. Any checks that Sally wrote had to be co-signed by one of the owners. Her weekly meetings did not include much discussion about program planning as the owners felt that as long as there were no complaints and enrolment remained high, Sally should have complete autonomy in the area of programming. Sally, on the other hand, took no interest in the owners' rental expenses or other payables.

Are there options?

Meetings between Sally and the owners were quite structured. She often received a phone call a day or two before the scheduled meeting with items that the owners wanted to discuss. This week John Keagan called with an unexpected list of topics and Sally was caught off guard.

> "Sally, regrettably, we have exceeded our budget on the renovations for the new day care. The addition of certain items to meet municipal regulations for safety added to the anticipated cost of renovations, forcing us to take a larger mortgage than originally planned. This step has resulted in an increase in monthly expenditures to meet the mortgage payments. Present accounts receivable do not justify the current expenditures.
>
> As a result of the increase in fixed expenses, our best solution is to cut one full time staff member until we can generate sufficient income to meet our expenses. While the new day care does have capacity for greater enrolment, and we do acknowledge that you maintained a wait list, the families on the wait list have not been contacted since September. We are uncertain if the families on the wait list are interested in enrolling their children at the time of our move, projected for mid May, or if they have made alternate arrangements for this fiscal year. Meanwhile, we must reduce expenses until our receivables change significantly. Please come prepared to provide input for our decision, which will determine how and when the staff member will be cut. Since we have always trusted your judgement when it comes to staffing, we will rely on your input in deciding which staff member to cut.
>
> Also, since we are hoping for a fresh start in our new location, we will take some time at the next meeting to refine job descriptions. Please bring a copy of the present job descriptions for staff and prepare some suggestions for modifications and/or improvements". (Exhibit 8.3).

So many thoughts were racing through Sally's mind. Fees were collected at the end of each month but families generally had until the seventh of the following month to make payments. Since cash flow had never been an issue, and since Sally was well aware of some of the financial struggles of the parents in the day care, she often agreed to extend payment deadlines. She never questioned the procedure since it did not seem to effect the centre's budget and it went a long way toward helping out the parents and promoting good will. Now she wondered: *would collecting all monies on time make a difference?*

Sally also reflected on the nearly eight months of renovations which were now completed. All the day care staff had been involved in the project and were looking forward to the day care's move. How could she possibly cut one staff member? All the staff had been so devoted to the project and all were valued members of the day care team. Sally asked herself, *"Should she cut Joanne, the staff member with the least seniority? Well, Joanne had worked just as hard on the project as all the other staff members. Furthermore, of all the educators in the day care, Joanne had the highest level of educational training and the most experience in the field."* Sally thought maybe she could consider letting Karen go. Karen was not pulling her load as much as Sally would like, but Karen was one of the first staff to be hired when the day care opened five years earlier. Then Sally reflected on arranging a job sharing situation where she reduced each staff members' work hours slightly. Although this meant part-time instead of full time salaries for employees it would assure each staff member of a job.

In anticipation of her meeting with the owners, Sally thought about the eight staff that were presently working at the day care. She wondered how she might have to change the shifts to ensure adequate supervision for the thirty-one children. Presently, there were two educators with each age group of six infants, eight toddlers, eleven children between the ages of two and three, and twelve four to five year old children. Additionally, there was one cook who came in at 8:30 a.m. and was responsible for morning snack and lunch preparation (Exhibit 8.1).

Sally reflected on the phone call and thought about the input that would be most effective and equitable to staff, parents, and the owners.

Exhibit 8.1

Hours of operation	7:30am to 6:00pm				
Days of Week	**Monday**	**Tuesday**	**Wednesday**	**Thursday**	**Friday**
day care administrator schedule	7:30am-3:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	7:30am-3:30pm
2 educators shift #1	7:30am-3:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	7:30am-3:30pm
4 educator shift #2	7:30am-3:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	7:30am-3:30pm
2 educators shift #3	7:30am-3:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	7:30am-3:30pm
cook	7:30am-3:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	9:30am-5:30pm	7:30am-3:30pm

Educator shifts rotate monthly so that early and late shifts occur every three months.

Exhibit 8.2

Job Description: Responsibilities

The educator, in conjunction with the director, is responsible for planning the curriculum. The educator is responsible for implementing programs within her/his classroom and for insuring that the availability of necessary resources. The educator is to ensure that programs are in accordance with the centre's philosophy, rules, and objectives.

Tasks

- Plan, implement, and evaluate activities and experiences for children.
- Ensure that children are integrated and welcomed into the day care environment
- Greet parents and deliver the needed information with respect to the development and socialization of the children.
- Organize parent meetings twice yearly.
- Supervise out door play
- Participate in professional development sessions/workshops

Candidate Case Study Response to Case Study LO1:

Case Study LO1: Increase in Fixed Expense: We Must Cut Staff

Problem:

Friendly Faces Day Care, a centre in operation for five years with an excellent reputation and solid waiting list, is expanding. The Licensed Operator has purchased a property that will allow them to increase enrolment by twenty-five (25) to thirty (30) children. Despite government funding for a down payment and consideration of renovation costs, the monthly mortgage payments will far exceed their current rent payments due to unforeseen municipal by-law requirements. The Owners decide to cut a staff position; the choice of staff has been left to the Director. So, before the centre has had a chance to "grow", they will be downsizing when they move to the new facility. The Director is taken completely by surprise at the news of the financial crisis. Presently, she is not involved and has no interest in the day to day financial commitments of the centre but is dedicated to the relationships with families, staff and children. Sally (the Director) is often in a position of being asked to wait on payments. The owners seem to be comfortable with Sally taking charge of collecting and depositing the parent fees, as well as maintaining and managing the program budget. The owners have also asked for Sally's input in redefining the staff's job descriptions at their next meeting. To Sally it is more important to try to salvage the staff position; however, it seems as if it is already a done deal. How does Sally convince the owners that they need not cut a position and at the same time have proper supervision of the thirty-one (31) children in care?

Criteria

Main Relationship Area: *Licensed Operators*

Criteria involved:

A 1 Status reports on all aspects of centre management
A 2 Access licensed operators as a resource and support
B 1 Operations policy manual
B 2 Job description
C 2 Timely and regular management meetings
C 3 Serve as a resource to licensed operators
D 2 Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics
D 3 Day Care Services Act
E 2 Develop operations plan to implement licensed operators strategic plan
F 1 Budget: develop, monitor, evaluate
F 2 Accounts payable
F 3 Accounts receivable
F 4 Cash flow
F 6 Reporting financial status to licensed operator

Swot Analysis

Strengths:

- Centre has a good reputation and substantial waiting list.
- Staff are very dedicated; all were involved in the planning, programming, moving of the new centre.
- Director has a good rapport with parents; she is empathetic and sensitive to their needs (gives leeway at times for payments to be late)
- Director and Owners meet weekly to discuss centre business
- New facility offers expansion to the community and increased revenues to further programs

Weaknesses:

- Waiting list has not been notified of the upcoming move and available spaces.
- Large gaps in reporting/knowledge/disclosure between the Director and the Owners: each is interested in only part of the operation; the Owners' main focus is on the finances, the Director is chiefly concerned with program and relationships.
- Advance payments are more secure than after the care is given.
- There needs to be guidelines for late payment in terms of time and money.
- Future waiting list maintenance needs to be established. Check-ins by parents or periodic calls from Director to see/inform where they are on list, etc.

Opportunities:

- Community could be approached to invest in new centre.
- Tighten reporting procedures and general practices between Director and Owners to ensure smoother operations.

- An additional seven (7) children could be enrolled in the new centre without increase in staff:

Infant unit:	6 children/2 staff	(2)
Toddler unit:	8 children/2 staff	
Twos and Threes:	11 children/2 staff	(3)
Fours and Fives:	12 children/2 staff	(2)

Threats:

- Morale of staff will plummet as one staff position is cut; parents will also feel this as it will be stressful enough for the move and the affect on the children.
- Ratios will be compromised with the cut of position;
- Licensing breach;
- Possible labour dispute as the Director is contemplating the cutting of a senior staff due to mediocre performance. No notification that there has been complaints to date.
- Foreclosure on the mortgage if enrolment has to drop to equate with new staff ratios.

Alternatives:

- Renegotiate the mortgage for lower payments over a short-term until enrolment increases.
- Apply for deferment of payback on government funding.
- Cut staff position of last one hired, but lose the most qualified and experienced staff.
- Cut staff position of first one hired, and deal with labour dispute as it arises.
- Cut all staff hours by one hour per day until enrolment increases.
- Look to budget to explore other possible cuts rather than a full position cut.
- Approach local businesses for investment.
- Waiting list should be contacted in any event to set up enrolment of new families either immediately or over course of next few months.
- Put off job description refinement until the move and transition of all concerned takes place and settled. The Director needs a job description as well and fast!
- A manual for both the Owners and Director developed to ensure that all aspects of centre operation are spelled out and responsibilities determined. Then an agenda for the upcoming year with periodic analysis to determine if duties are being performed by both parties. As well, the weekly meetings should have opportunities for the Director to have input; an agenda for both to set. This will enable the centre to be in a proactive rather than reactive state when difficulties arise.
- Input into this move by all parties, staff, families, community, along with the Director may have been useful. The Owners would benefit from outside expertise.
- Parent payment

Recommendations:

- An arrangement with the bank to extend mortgage payments would be beneficial for the short term as well; increase in enrolment is so close.
- Arrangement for deferment of government funding for short term until enrolment picks up.
- If more children cannot be enrolled immediately and other expenses cannot be cut, there may have to be cuts to staff hours; however, this will indeed be short term (as short as four months). Each staff would lose one hour per day.
- Payment policy needs to be restructured as stated above.
- Future meetings between Director and Owners to be conducted as stated above with full disclosure from both parties.
- Postponement of job description refinement for upcoming months in order to address the financial situation without distraction. When it does take place the present descriptions need to be more specific concerning duties in all areas in order for them to be measurable when evaluation is done.
- Concerns regarding job performance need to be addressed as they come up, not when a crisis arises.

Summary Evaluation by Five Peers and Validator:

Candidate: J. Morgan Date: .....

Evaluator: five Peers, Validator

Position: ___Self ___√ Peer ___Validator

Case Study LO1

Problem/Decision addressed: The licensed operator (Board or Owner) wants to cut staffing which will jeopardize program quality

Relationship Area: III. Licensed Operator

Rating: 3= Demonstrates excellence 2= Demonstrates basic competence 1= Needs improvement

			Rating			
*	Criteria	Description	1	2	3	
		A. Systems				
	A.2	Access licensed operator as a resource and support		√		
*	A.5	Systems to manage information and document quality of child care services		√	√	
		B. Policy				
	B.2	Job description			√√	
		C. Services & Programs				
	C.3	Serve as a resource and support to centre committees and licensed operator		√		
	C.4	Advocacy	√		√	
	C.5	Implement policies and procedures established by the Licensed operator (owners/boards)		√	√	
		D. Legal or Professional Sanctions				
	D.2	Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics		√		
		E. Planning				
*	E.1	Identify and represent areas for centre development to licensed operator		√	√	
*	E.2	Develop operations plan to implement licensed operators strategic plan		√		
		F. Finances				
	F.1	Budget: develop, monitor, evaluate and adjust			√	
	F.2	Accounts payable			√	
	F.3	Accounts receivable			√	
	F.4	Cash flow: deposit, payables, petty cash			√	
	F.5	Audit				N/A
	F.6	Reporting financial status to licensed operator		√		

Overall Score: 3

Ratings by one peer:

B. For each of the three criteria marked with an *, complete the following sentences.

1. Criteria Number: *A.5 — Systems to manage information and document quality of child care services*

a) Her action to ... (Describe the action)
Develop better systems to maintain and monitor the financial situation and schedule regular meetings with agenda.
... regarding the criteria rated a **3** (rating) because she...
should restructure the payment policy, tighten the reporting procedures and add an agenda and regular meetings.

b) To perform at a **2** (one of the other possible ratings), she would have ... *Tighten the payment policy and reporting finances only.*

c) To perform at a **1** (the remaining possible rating) she would have... *Only operate within a limited number of budget categories, have minimal management of financial position.*

Other comments...

2. Criteria Number: *E1 — Identify and represent areas for centre development to licensed operator*

a) Her action to ... (Describe the action) *Present the owners with a number of options* ... regarding the criteria rated a **3** (rating) because she... *provide a number of options which would have a positive effect on the situation; articulate the consequences of the suggested option; saw need for a plan.*

b) To perform at a **2** (one of the other possible ratings), she would have ... *Presented the options to the owners*

c) To perform at a **1** (the remaining possible rating) she would have... *Done what the owner said; cut staff.*

Other comments...

3. Criteria Number: *E2 — Develop operations plan to implement licensed operators strategic plan*

a) Her action to ... (Describe the action) *Tighten procedures, consider alternative plans; discuss with owner, get a better job description for self; Postpone staff job descriptions; go to staff for ideas; go back to owner; cut staff according to protocol* ... regarding the criteria rated a **2** (rating) ... *because she... realizes that procedures need to be laid down, time needed for both board and director to work on, chance for consultations with parties involved, continued consultations with board to find an ultimate compromise/solution.*

b) To perform at a **1** one of the other possible ratings), she would have ... *Implement plan with no reflection or timeline/procedure*

c) To perform at a **3** (the remaining possible rating) she would have... *All of the 2 rating plus procedure set up; timeline developed; consultation with staff; evaluation component.*

Other comments...

C. Overall rating for the case study **2.5**

Other comments...

Journal Assignments:
Case study LO1
Candidate: ..... Date: .....
A.1 B.1 C.1 E.2
A.3 C.2
A.4
A.6

Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification Pilot
Guided Journal Entry:

Relationship Area: Licensed Operator **Practice Area:** A. Systems
Element: 3. Evaluated annually by Licensed Operator
Candidate name: J. Morgan

Candidate's Journal Entry	Facilitators Dialogue
1. Describe an incident/example where this criteria was the focus of a decision/problem that might occur in your role as an Early childhood Centre Administrator — Or — Describe a problem/decision or action related to the criteria that might occur in your role as an Early Childhood Centre Administrator.	
After I had been at a centre as an assistant director for five years, the Board decided to evaluate my performance. They invited staff to comment on anything regarding my performance, didn't give them any guidelines as to what areas they wanted feedback upon. They didn't ask my director for an evaluation. The Board committee collated the responses and met with me. The evaluation was very negative, the Board members aggressive. All of the staff did not respond, only those who had a bone to pick with me. The majority of staff did not respond since they were fine with how I did my work and didn't feel that a response was necessary. I was not given a copy of the evaluation. They told me that my job would change and how it would. I was devastated.	*Sounds like a scary experience.* *The Board didn't seem to know how to evaluate and that affected how they approached you.* *You seemed to have expected a good evaluation and this one was a surprise to you.*
2. What factors did you or would you consider when deciding upon an action?	
I first did an examination of my work in light of the criticisms to assess whether or not they were valid. This assessment resulted in a realization that I needed to be more aware of how my communication with staff members could be interpreted. Other than that, my work was good, I was keeping enrolment up, parents were comfortable with me, I handled complaints regarding the service well, etc. I knew that the Board members on the evaluation committee did not have any background in evaluation and I was concerned about what they might do. I felt that I had to protect myself.	*You seemed very trusting of staff members.* *You were scared, what made you feel that way?*

3. What did you/would you do after considering these factors?
I went to a labour lawyer and reviewed what had happened. She advised me and I took her advice. I accepted the new job description and began to document my performance in relation to the new job description.

4. What action would you take now?
Now, I would challenge the Board at the evaluation meeting as to how they conducted the evaluation. I would go to the evaluation session with a recorder or a lawyer. I would submit a complaint to the Labour Rights Commission. If I did decide to do the work in the new job description, I would demand compensation for the reduced pay that resulted from the change in my responsibilities.

You learned from this experience.
You have a lot more confidence now than you did then!

What made the difference besides time?

Phase B — Case Study Response

Training Outcomes:

Case Study Writing

- to provide opportunity for practice of general writing skills, including selection of a topic using one's professional portfolio and journals, style, language, planning and organization of material to be presented.
- to provide a method by which candidates can prepare case studies for the ECCA certification process.
- to give candidates the necessary skills for editing their own work.
- to provide a comfort level in writing about one's own experiences.

Application of Ethics

- Recognize when a decision contains ethical components
- Identify personal values and those of others
- Apply an ethical decision making model

Example of Written Case Study:

Journal Assignments/ Written Case Study Competencies to address

Case study LO2

Candidate: ..... Date: .....

A.4	B.1	E.2	F.2
A.5			F.3
A.6			F.4
			F.5

Written Case Study:

She was not up to the job, or was she?

Ella is reminiscing. Oh, how well she remembers her first day as director. She was very excited, but, hoped she was up to the challenge. Of course, there was no reason why she shouldn't be as she had been "second in command" for nine years, but, she had never had to handle all aspects of the center before. She had felt a tingle of excitement as she had greeted the other staff members, parents and children. The center is small – forty-two children – starting with toddlers through to five year olds. They did not have an after-school unit because there is a well run "Excel" program in the local school. The owner of the center, Linda, who had also been the director, had wanted to put more time and energy into her home life as she had some pressing personal problems and being confident in Ella's abilities had asked her to fill her shoes. This means that Ella has to organize eight staff members, and a part time cook, plus she would spend some time with the children – usually covering breaks etc. and the rest of the time would be in the office. Ella had done this a little in the past when Linda was on vacation, so was aware of what the job entailed – or so she thought.

Linda had always been busy, and very competent, so there were many aspects of the job Ella had not handled or even seen Linda handle. Unfortunately Linda had been unable to spend much time with Ella, as Linda had been called away to nurse her mother who was dying of cancer.

The first days had gone well – no problems with the center or from parents. Ella had heaved a sigh of relief. She had spent some time at the end of each day going through correspondence, which had posed her first problem. What exactly was she supposed to do with this stuff? Give it to Linda to read? File it? Do a synopsis of the mail and then file it? Then where should she file some of it? She spent a lot of time trying to figure out what letters went in to which files, but, she discovered that she did not really understand Linda's filing system. The invoices also posed another problem. Give them to Bill – Linda's husband who also did the books – daily, save them weekly, or monthly? She decided to keep the invoices and letters in separate files until the end of the month, or when she next saw one of them and mark them "Linda" and "Bill." She also put any cheques, or correspondence from parents concerning money/fees etc. into Bill's file. She was not sure when or how often Linda or Bill would be checking in.

Ella had continued this way for a month. Linda had called twice, but, as she seemed to be a bit frazzled Ella had not bothered her with what she felt were petty concerns. Ella had not heard from Bill at all.

Ella's seemingly ordered life came to pieces a few days into the following month. There had been an irate phone call from Bill. "Ella, do you have any invoices there from Childscope and Farmers – the milk people?"

"Just a sec, Bill, let me check. I am glad you called because I have a file folder here for you with statements and invoices and a few cheques that I am sure you need."

There had been silence at the end of the phone. Then, Bill had said in a very controlled voice, "Ellen, why on earth didn't you send them to me?" He had indignantly muttered on for a while making Ella feel as if she had let him down. She had hung up feeling depressed and that she had failed Bill in some way and also confused as he had not given her any real direction on how she was to continue. She had also forgotten to ask for some petty cash that the center needed. Ella sighed and turned to a pile of papers that Linda had sent her. Ella had little time to look at them in any great detail. She discovered that they followed a theme – family groupings within child care settings. Very interesting stuff, but, was this a hint, just for interest or what?

Ella finished skimming through the family grouping information and moved on to another pile of papers. Amongst these were requests from the staff for equipment and supplies. Certainly too much for the petty cash account – now depleted – and Ella decided after the phone conversation with Bill that she would put these requests on hold.

The next upset had come when Bill came bustling in early one morning a few weeks later.

"Ella are you hoarding invoices again?" Ella had started to send invoices to Bill, but, had held onto two as she had not received the goods yet – or so she thought. Of course these were the ones he was looking for and on investigation the goods had arrived, but, the staff had not told her and neither had she asked them. Bill was

furious as he had missed the early payment discounts that he always took advantage of. Then he blew again when he saw the attendance sheets. A couple of families had changed from part-time to full time status at the beginning of the previous month and he hadn't known. Ella thought she had told him, but, admittedly had not sent him the sheets.

"How am I to bill them now? It looks so unprofessional to re-bill for the previous month!" Bill had continued ranting for a while, until Ella thought she had better pluck up the courage to give him the list of supplies they needed and request some more petty cash. Bill blew big time!

"Ella! How am I supposed to keep the books if I don't have any idea of what is needed. Here is $50 for now, but, you are going to have to wait until this mess is sorted out before I can look at the main list! I am still going through the file of stuff you hoarded last month and applying the cheques you never gave me on time. Oh! and by the way, would you dig out all the invoices etc. for the past year as the auditors will be coming in next week. Linda usually handles this and as I am going to spend some time with her I think you could handle this for me." Bill left.

Poor Ella had felt her confidence slowly ebbing away. If she couldn't handle day to day accounts how in the world was she going to handle the auditors. The phone rang. It was Linda. After pleasantries and enquiries about her mothers health, Linda excitedly asked Ella what she had thought about the family groupings idea. Ella cautiously said it looked interesting.

"Well, Ella I want you to initiate this as soon as possible as I am very excited about this and am sure that this is the way to go. I am presuming the staff have read all the stuff I sent you, so they are primed. So – please tell the staff at this weeks staff meeting that it is going to be initiated and possibly get a newsletter out to tell the parents next week. Then we can start working on it to begin next month. I have given this a lot of thought and I feel that this seems like a fair time line. OOPS, I had better go as Mom is calling. Call me if you have any concerns. Bye!"

So here she is reminiscing about her elation when she began as director and what was she going to do about the confusion she felt about so many things now? The staff had not seen the information on family groupings and Ella also knows that they would not take kindly to it. Ella had always spent more time on the floor than Linda and Ella knew that most of the staff did not take kindly to change. Doesn't Linda remember what happened when they started encouraging the staff to be more child centered? After what seemed months of Ella and sometimes Linda going into the classrooms and demonstrating what they wanted and giving the staff articles etc. the staff and their own evaluations came back very negative and they had to start all over again – more slowly this time. Ella now thinks that this job is going to be too much for her. How had Linda managed all these years? Then a new thought came into Ella's head – possibly Bill and Linda were being unreasonable. Yes, Ella decided that she had to sit down and list the issues she needed to talk to them about. Possibly after clearing the air of confusion, laying down some ground rules and lines of communication she could handle this job after all.

Binders Check List

Following is a list of forms, statements and documents that would be included in the practice binders. The list is not exhausted and an assessment of what is included and what is missing is considered in making a recommendation.

Legal and Professional Sanctions
Labour Standards Code
Child and Family Services Act
Day Care Act and Regulations
Health Act
NS Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics
Incorporations Act- Society or Commercial
Bylaws (if a Society)
Minimum Wage Order
First Aid Regulations
Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
Volunteer Services Act
Occupational Health and Safety Act
Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System Regulations (WHEMIS)
Reporting and Investigating Allegations of Abuse: A Protocol for Child Care Practitioners Working in Regulated Child Care
Using your Home for a Day care – Revenue Canada
Child Abuse Register Request for a Search
Criminal Records Check
Insurance- General Liability
Director's Legal Liability if incorporated as a society
Operating License

Finances:
Enrollment projections
Fee Structure
Financial Statement Audit Report
Inventory control
Invoice
Operating Budget
Payment Policy
Purchase Orders
Staff/Substitute Time Sheet
Tender format

Systems:
Admissions Policy
Archival material
Developmental Checklist/Progress Report
Executive Director's Report
Floor Plan/Classroom Layout
Historical Data
Medical Form
Oath of Confidentiality
Observation and Recording Report forms
Organizational Chart
Orientation package for staff
Professional Development Policy
Program Evaluation/ECERS
Salary Scale
Wait List format

Services & Programs:
Anti Bias statement
Behaviour Management Policy
Board Agenda (if a Society)
Centre Newsletter
Child Abuse Report Form/Protocol
Curriculum approach
Daily Report form
Emergency Phone List
Fire/Evacuation Procedure
Health and Sanitation Policy
Medication form
Menu
Mission Statement
Professional Memberships/Associations/Journals
Program Philosophy
Promotional materials
Safety Protocols

Special Needs provisions
Staff Meeting Agenda

Policy:
Application Package – Immunization Form, Emergency Consent Form
Job Description
Orientation Package for Board (if a Society)
Parent Policy handbook
Personnel Policy
Staff/Executive Director Evaluation – Self Evaluation
Volunteer/Student Policy

Planning:
Annual Report
Curriculum Planning Form
Parent Feedback Questionnaire/Survey
Staffing Policy
Strategic Plan

Example of Validator's Practice Binder Recommendation

Other Documents Included:

Multiage grouping policy; Attendance records; Sign- In/Out sheet; Child Care Awareness Days plan

Missing Documents Summary:

- Legal/professional Sanctions: Health Act; Freedom of Information Act; Volunteer Services Act; Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHEMIS); Using Your Home for a Day Care- Revenue Canada; Criminal Records Check.
- Finances: Inventory Control; Purchase Orders; Tender Format
- Systems: Archival Material; Historical Data; Observation and Recording forms; Organizational Chart; Professional Development Policy; Salary Scale
- Services & Programs: Anti Bias statement; Daily Report form; Health and Sanitation Policy; Mission Statement; Special Needs Provisions
- Policy: Volunteer/Student Policy
- Planning: Curriculum Planning Form; Parent Feedback Form; Strategic Plan

Overall Recommendation:
On a scale of 1 to 3 with 1 being needs improvement and 3 being excellent, this binder(s) is a 2, with a provision that the staff areas — salary scales, professional development policy; the organization areas — organizational chart, mission statement; and the three planning pieces that are missing are addressed

Validator: M. Jordon **Date:** December, 16, 2000

Step 3: Validation

The third step in the Early Childhood Centre Administrator (ECCA) Certification Process, *Validation*, is an assessment of the candidate's competency based on parent and staff perceptions and an evaluation of the program using a program evaluation tool suited to the age group in the classroom being evaluated. The staff perception tool is the short form of the Work Environment Survey (WES)[1]. The program evaluation tools used are the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale [2] (ECERS) and/or Infant Toddler Environment Rating Scale (ITERS)[3] and/or the School Aged Environment Rating Scale (SAERS)[4]. The validator visits the candidate's centre to do the program evaluation.

Notice of Validation:
Early Childhood Centre Administrator (ECCA) Certification Validation
Instructions to Candidates

Notice to Parents and Staff:

Notify parents and staff that validation will be conducted in the next month. Post the enclosed notice in a spot where it can be seen by staff and parents. Attach a copy of the "Questions and Answers about ..." brochure to the bottom of the posted notice. (Three copies of the brochure are enclosed in the package.)

Surveys:

The two survey's will be conducted prior to the Validator's site visit to assess the centre classrooms.

1. **Parent's Views Survey:** [5]
   Parent Satisfaction Survey, is distributed to parents. This validates the customer service aspect of the administrator's work. (Clean copy for copying enclosed in the validation package).

   Procedure:
   - Set the return date for survey returns and write it in along with the centre name on the master copy of the survey.
   - Make a copy of the Parent's View's survey for each parent/family
   - Attach an envelope to each copy
   - Distribute the copies to each parent /family

1. Adapted from, Jorde-Bloom, Sheerer and Britz (1991), "Work Environment Survey – short form," in *Blueprint for Action*, Mt. Rainier, MD: New Horizons, p 179.
2. Harms, T., Cryer, D. and Clifford, R. Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale Revised, (1998), New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
3. Harms, T., Cryer, D. and Clifford, R. Infant-Toddler Environment Rating Scale, (1990), New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
4. Harms, T., Vineberg Jacobs, E., and Romano White, D. School Aged Environment Rating Sacle, (1996), New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.
5. Adapted from, Jorde-Bloom, Sheerer and Britz (1991), "Parent Satisfaction Survey," in *Blueprint for Action*, Mt. Rainier, MD: New Horizons, p 210.

- Collect the sealed response envelopes in an envelope
- When the survey returns date arrives, send the envelope with the parents responses to the Validator
- The Validator will code the responses, make recommendations, write a report and send a copy to the CCECENS

Evaluation: At least 60% of parents respond with an average rating between 3.5 and 5.

2. Early Childhood Work Environment Survey

Short form of the *Work Environment Survey* : The form is handed out to the staff, who would complete it, put it in an envelope, seal it, and hand it into the validator via the administrator or a designated staff. This gives a sense of how the staff as a whole perceive their work environment. (Clean copy for copying enclosed in the validation package).

Process:

- Set the return date for survey returns and write it in along with the centre name on the master copy of the survey.
- Make a copy of the Early Childhood Work Environment Survey for each staff member
- Attach an envelope to each copy
- Distribute the copies to each staff member
- Collect the sealed response envelopes in an envelope
- When the survey returns date arrives, send the envelope with the staff responses to the validator
- The Validator will code the responses, make recommendations, write a report and send a copy to the CCECENS

Evaluation: 80-100 % of staff respond with an average rating between of 3.5 and 5.

3. Validator Site Visit:

An ECERS/ITERS/SACERS will be taken on the classrooms within a Centre. Where there are more than one classroom with the same age group, one ECERS/ITERS/SACERS may be taken using sections of the ECERS/ITERS/SACERS for each of the classrooms giving a composite of that age grouping rather than one classroom rating. This gives an assessment of the quality of the program, and provides the administrator with an external assessment of her classrooms. One half hour of time must be available for the validator to talk with staff regarding those observations that need questions answered in order to arrive at a rating. The validator will prepare a summary report and submit it to the CCECENS. (A copy of each of the scales is included in the package on loan for your information during the validation process. Copies can be purchased from Child Care Connection Nova Scotia.)

Process:

- A date for the site visit is made between the Validator and the ECCA Candidate.

- The Candidate provides a description of the classrooms in her centre giving numbers of classrooms, numbers of children, ages, program types (full time part time), number of staff, program models, etc. The Validator will choose the classrooms and inform the candidate upon arrival at the site.
- The Validator will use the appropriate environment rating scale for each classroom assessed.
- The assessment may involve a meeting with a classroom teacher for clarification of items. Please expect this and arrange for a staff person in each of the classrooms to be available for a one half hour period during the validator visit. If possible, please arrange a place where the validator and the teacher can meet to discuss the items for clarification.
- A report of each classroom will be prepared, recommendations formulated and forwarded to CCECENS.

Evaluation: 50% of the classrooms will be rated, reflecting a diversity in ages and locations (if applicable) with an average rating between 5 and 7 in each of the seven sub scale areas for each classroom rated.

Step 4: Recommendation

In the fourth step in the Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification process, *Recommendation*, a Validator brings all the work done by the candidate together. A report is developed and recommendations formulated regarding the Candidate's competency. These reports and recommendations are presented to the Certification Council of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia. A Candidate Review Committee, made up of validators, facilitators, and the Certification Council executive, considers all the information and make a decision regarding the candidate's certification status.

Contents of Candidates file:

- Application
- Application questionnaire
- Application interview report by certification review committee
- Review of Professional Portfolio by Certification Review Committee
- Learning Plan
- Five (5) case study responses
- Five (5) case study presentations
- Fifty (50) peer evaluations
- Ten (10) validator evaluations
- Ten (10) self evaluations
- Four (4) validator portfolio evaluations (1x 4 portfolios)
- Two (2) validation reports
  - First Report: ECERS/ITERS/SCERS of classrooms from first site visit (end of examination phase A)
  - Second Report: ECERS/ITERS/SCERS of classrooms from second site visit
    - Report of Parent Feedback survey
    - Report of work environment survey for Organizational Climate
- Validators summary report and recommendations
- Certification Review committee report regarding status of candidate
- Could also include make up plan and report of make plan.

CHAPTER 2

Developing Standards: The Early Childhood Centre Administrator Data Base

In developing the Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification Process, the management areas grid (Appendix A) provides a list of what will be evaluated, that is, the cells of the grid, or competencies. To be standards, these competencies have to have an objective, collective measure of the caliber of the competence. In recognition of the need for standards and the lack of agreement on what the standards for an early childhood centre administrator are, a data collection tool, the Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification Data Base, was built into the project. This tool is building a data set that can be used to develop standards when a valid and reliable sample is reached. The database provides rich sources of evaluative and demographic data that will provide a sample to determine standards.

How is the data collected?

The Early Childhood Centre Administrator Certification Process has a number of vehicles for collecting the data. Sources of evaluative data are the peer, self and validator evaluation of case study presentations based on the relationship areas and specific competencies within that relationship areas. Ratings are based on a three-point scale, with 1 — being needs improvement, 2 — demonstrates basic competence and 3 — demonstrates excellence. Along with the rating, evaluators give a reason why the rating is given and a description of what the candidate would do to get the other ratings. This gives three ratings for each item evaluated. Other sources of evaluative data are validator site visits and practice binders.

How is the data stored so that it can be used to generate data sets to develop standards?

A software package was developed to store the data gathered in an efficient manner, so that when the sample is valid and reliable, analysis can be performed to start the process of standardization.

Data is collected on the Candidate's:

- Addresses, centre, phone numbers;
- Years of experience, age, kinds of experiences;
- Training credentials, credit/non credit professional development;
- Facilitator/mentor;
- Assignments completed and dates including journals, case studies, practice binders, training sessions,
- Self, Peer and Validator ratings given in case studies response phase and written case study phase;
- Validator reports.

The candidate is evaluated and given ratings on fifteen competencies in the relationship area of the case study. These ratings are inputted into the data base for each candidate for each case study. The data base has the capability to generate a report of each competency, and the ratings explanation given for the ratings. This information then can be used to develop standard statements for each rating for each competency, establishing criteria for each of the ratings for each competency. The data base allows continuous improvement of the standards without disrupting the process.

The advantages to this method of developing standards:

- Standardization can be an evolving process, getting more refined as the process moves, allowing for adjustment to competence expectations;
- It involves early childhood practice in determining practice standards;
- Collectivity develops;
- Standards can reflect provincial/territorial, regional and national contexts
- As samples increase, data sets can be merged provincial/regional/national standards can emerge.
- Having an open process in the development of standards will lessen the possibility of subjective biases and increase the richness of the standards;
- This process could be generalized over other positions in early childhood practice, and other occupations in the process of developing standards.

The early childhood centre administrator certification process is providing data that will contribute to the standardization of the role of the early childhood centre administrator, an important aspect in the work toward professional recognition. The vehicle for the collection of this data is the early childhood centre administrator certification process.

Conclusion

Developing early childhood centre administrator certification provides the child care sector with another piece in the professional recognition puzzle for child care. Through the process, early childhood centre administrators will be recognized for the complexity of work they perform and present themselves as accountable and responsible for their practice.

Appendix A:

Work Description:

The work description has two components. Job Specifications and the ECCA Management Areas Grid. Job Specifications covers the skills, knowledge and abilities for the position of early childhood centre administrator and the ECCA Management Areas Grid covers the responsibilities of the early childhood centre administrator. The ECCA Management Areas Grid is a two way matrix that identifies the practice areas for which the administrator is responsible as systems, policy, services/programs, legal/professional sanctions, planning, and finances. She is responsible for these practice areas in the relationship areas of staff, families, licensed operator, facility and community.

Job Specifications:

Early Childhood Centre Administrator

Objective:

To manage the systems, policy, services/programs/practice, legal and professional sanctions, planning and financial aspects of the early childhood centre infrastructure as it relates to the staff, families, licensed operator, facility and community.

Authority & Reporting Relationships:

The Early Childhood Centre Administrator's (ECCA) authority extends to the management of the infrastructure in controlling and applying resources relative to the centre staff, the centre facility, the community in which the centre is operating, the families which use the service, and the Licensed Operator of the centre, – within objectives established by the Licensed Operator. This infrastructure includes the management areas of the centre's infrastructure, including systems, policy, services/programs/practice, legal/professional sanctions, planning and finances.

The ECCA manages the delivery of services on a daily basis, and as such, has autonomy to act within her management responsibility areas.

The ECCA is a member of the operations management team and as such will be consulted and a key informant on all decisions regarding the delivery of all centre operations.

Qualifications:

Education:

Successful completion of post secondary training in Early Childhood Education, and Professional development training in administrative skills, supervisory skills, fiscal and budgetary management, operations planning, government relations, program evaluation, policy development
and organizational models; ...Or
An ECE Administrator post secondary credential; ...Or
Administration in Community Services post secondary credential.

Experience:

Minimum of two years of experience as a child care teacher ...Or

Experience in a supervisory capacity in a community service ...Or
Supervisory experience in child care

Skills :

Leadership Skills:

Demonstrate —

- ability to speak publicly
- clear and effective written communication
- clear and effective oral communication
- effective group skills
- mature judgment
- ability to work co-operatively with all people
- acceptance and respect of individual differences
- ability to motivate
- ability to set priorities
- skills in a variety of decision making techniques
- negotiation skills

Self-Evaluation Skills:

Demonstrates ability to —

- seek/use help / assistance
- interpret and apply advice received
- response to constructive criticism

Professionalism:

Demonstrates —

- the ability to establish and maintain professional relationships
- skill in ethical decision making
- participation in and contribution to professional associations
- current knowledge of research, trends and issues in the child care field
- ability to seek guidance and counsel where appropriate
- ability to develop sound educational goals for young children.
- continuous professional development
- advocacy skills
- confidentiality
- complete knowledge of policies, regulations and reporting systems in regards to licensing of facilities
- skill in time management

Personal:

- is articulate
- is pleasant, caring, sensitive, courteous, trusting.
- is resourceful
- attends to own physical health & hygiene.

Technical

- competent in the use of computers
- competent in the development and maintenance of data bases, spreadsheets and filing systems

ECCA Certification
Early Childhood Administrator Management Areas Grid

PRACTICE	A. Systems	B. Policy	C. Services & Programs	D. Legal/ Professional Sanctions	E. Planning	F. Finances
RELATIONSHIPS ***I. Staff***	1. Medicals 2. Compensation-salary scales, payroll 3. Recruitment 4. Hiring 5. Termination 6. Scheduling 7. Evaluation 8. Record, store &secure personnel information 9. Record & store anecdotal behavioural and medical information regarding children 10. Orientation 11. Professional development 12. Rewards & recognition 13. Communication 14. Evaluate & document program effectiveness 15. Ensure adequate supply of qualified substitutes 16. Decision making with clear lines of responsibility	1. Personnel 2. Program-outing, discipline, philosophy, curriculum etc. 3. Procedural guidelines re health, safety, emergency, including medications, serious incident, accident 4. Confidential information policy 5. Job descriptions 6. Anti Bias 7. Parent-staff 8. Evaluation 9. Accepting and releasing children 10. Benefits 11. Criminal/child abuse registry checks	1. Resources 2. Team building-professional development, coaching 3. Supervision-mentoring, evaluation, discipline, mediation 4. Advocacy 5. Curriculum development a) programs respect diversity in family dynamics, culture, abilities, etc.; b) Reflect centre philosophy c) Ensure materials and resources are age appropriate d) Ensure adherence to safety procedures e) Ensure nutritional needs are met 6. Ensure adequate resources are available to implement quality programming (stimulation, protection & building relationships) 7. Consults with health professionals regarding health and developmental issues and initiate interventions as required external agencies [6] 8. Timely and regular staff meetings 9. Represent licensed operator to staff and liaise 10. Trains staff in child abuse protocol, control of infectious diseases and workplace health and safety procedures	1. Labour Act 2. Child Welfare Act 3. Day Care Act 4. Insurance-malpractice liability 5. Documentation 6. Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics 7. Criminal Reference Check legislation [5] 8. Health Act	1. Input to strategic planning from staff re program, facility, policy,etc. 2. Assess available resources and identified needs for new and existing programs 3. Curriculum planning consistent with program philisophy 4. Operations/Management plan 5. Staffing plan	1. Payroll 2. Purchasing program materials,resources and supplies 3. Enrollment/attendance 4. Petty cash

5. Where required by Law
6. Grant MacEwan Community College, Early Childhood Administrator Occupational Analysis and Validation Survey results, 1992, GMCCEdmonton, 1992

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ECCA Certification
Early Childhood Administrator Management Areas Grid

PRACTICE	A. Systems	B. Policy	C. Services & Programs	D. Legal/ Professional Sanctions	E. Planning	F. Finances
RELATIONSHIPS II. Families	1. Recording and informing parents of information regarding children - anecdotal, developmental 2. Documentation - medical, behavioural, key events/ happenings, unusual incidents, information regarding children 3. Wait list maintenance and cultivation 4. Enrollment orientation and discharge	1. Program policy 2. Payment policy 3. Parent/client policy - a) Medical b) Suspected child abuse(parent/other/staff) c) Arrival/Departure (acceptance/releasing) d) ill child e) Accident/serious incident f) Enrollment g)Orientation h) Discharge i) Nutrition 4. Wait List policy 5. Confidential Information Policy 6. Parents role in the centre	1. Regular and timely communication re children & centre events, activities and plans 2. Liaison with community services and families where appropriate 3. Parenting resources 4. Programs respect diversity in family dynamics,culture,etc. 5. Engage parents in program 6. Interprets centre philosophy to parents	1. Day Care Act 2. Child Welfare Act 3. Documentation 4. Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics 5. Freedom of Information Act	1. Input to strategic planning by families 2. Client satisfaction evaluation 3. Wait list	1. Invoicing 2. Collections 3. Fee structure 4. Receipts
III. Licensed Operator Owners/ Boards of Directors	1. Regular & timely status reports on all aspects of centre management to the Licensed Operator 2. Access licensed operator as a resource and support 3. Evaluated annually by Licensed Operator 4. Archives and maintains historical perspective of centre and its programs 5. Systems to manage information and document quality of centre services 6. Handle Correspondence	1. Operations Policy Manual 2. Job decsription	1. Quarterly reprots and documentation 2. Timely & regular management meetings 3. Serve as a resource & support to centre committees and licensed operator 4. Advocacy 5. Implement policies and procedures established by Licensed Operator (Owners/Boards)	1. Registry of Joint Stocks (Incorporation) 2. Child Care Practitioners Code of Ethics 3. Day Care Services Act	1. Identify and represent areas for centre development to Licensed Operator 2. Develop operations plan to implement Licensed Operator's strategic plan	1. Budget-develop, monitor, evaluation & adjust 2. Accounts Payable 3. Accounts Receivable 4. Cash flow - deposits, payables, petty cash 5. Audit 6. Reporting financial status to licensed operator

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ECCA Certification
Early Childhood Administrator Management Areas Grid

PRACTICE	A. Systems	B. Policy	C. Services & Programs	D. Legal/ Professional Sanctions	E. Planning	F. Finances
RELATIONSHIPS *IV. Facility*	1. Inventory control 2. Requisition, repair, replacement of materials and equipment 3. Contracting 4. Leases 5. Security 6. Optimal space usage	1. Program policy re fire, health, safety & program procedures 2. Facility review 3. Contracting 4. Leases	1. Maintenance 2. Design 3. Layout 4. Outdoor space 5. Office space 6. Consultation space for private meetings 7. Kitchen Facilities 8. Classrooms 9. Distribution of materials, equipment & supplies 10. Washrooms 11. Meeting with authorities regarding the facility as required 12. Ensure that the environment is healthy & safe for all who are involved in the centre	1. Fire, Health, Day Care Acts 2. Zoning Laws 3. Taxes 4. Commercial Assessments 5. Insurance/Risk Mangement 6. Documentation	1. Input to strategic planning regarding facility 2. Resource development planning 3. Upkeep/replacement/ additions plan 4. Review and project future needs for facility	1. Purchasing services, equipment for facilities 2. Tendering 3. Job costing
V. *Community*	1. Regular audits of systems, programs, accounts 2. Communications plan for projecting an effective public image 3. Marketing 4. Gather relevent social/ political information that will affect the centre 5. Assessment of community needs 6. Licensing	1. Communications policy 2. Sponsorship policy 3. Volunteer policy 4. Student placement policy 5. Grant policy 6. Community involvement 7. Licensing	1. Marketing & analysis strategy that reflects honest best practicles in carrying out the centre's philosophy 2. Public education & awareness of child growth & development& benefits of child care services 3. Promotion of quality child care 4. Referral 5. Volunteer 6. Advocacy 7. Develop materials to promote the centre 8. Establish partnerships with community services/ organizations 9. Liaison with Community Services/Organizations regarding the child care service	1. Child Welfare Act 2. Day Care Act 3. Code of Ethics 4. Freedom of Information Act 5. Criminal Reference Check legislation where required	1. Community input to strategic planning 2. Resource/service development in response to community needs 3. Fundraising	1. Fundraising 2. Funding/investment partners 3. In kind donations 4. Deal with financial institutions and funding bodies

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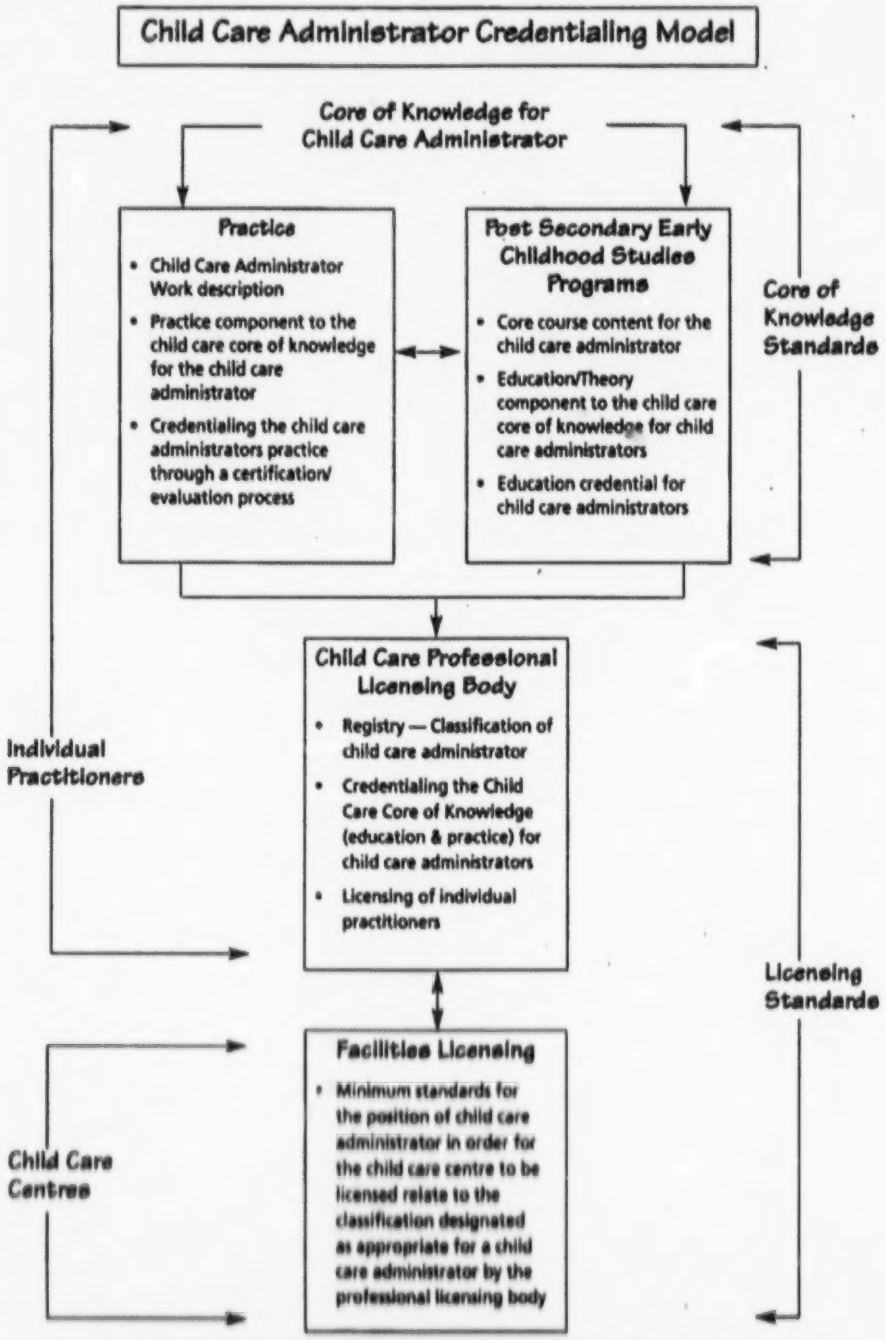
Appendix B:


Child Care Administrator Credentialing Model
Core of Knowledge for Child Care Administrator
Practice
• Child Care Administrator Work description
• Practice component to the child care core of knowledge for the child care administrator
• Credentialing the child care administrators practice through a certification/ evaluation process
Post Secondary Early Childhood Studies Programs
• Core course content for the child care administrator
• Education/Theory component to the child care core of knowledge for child care administrators
• Education credential for child care administrators
Core of Knowledge Standards
Child Care Professional Licensing Body
• Registry — Classification of child care administrator
• Credentialing the Child Care Core of Knowledge (education & practice) for child care administrators
• Licensing of individual practitioners
Individual Practitioners
Licensing Standards
Facilities Licensing
• Minimum standards for the position of child care administrator in order for the child care centre to be licensed relate to the classification designated as appropriate for a child care administrator by the professional licensing body
Child Care Centres

"Child Care Administrator Credentialing Model" developed by E. Elaine Ferguson, Child Care Connection-NS (project funded by Child Care Visions of Human Resources Development Canada)

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Core of Knowledge Standards

This level contains application (practice) components and theoretical (education) components. Practitioners and training institutions are partners in constructing the child care core of knowledge through consultation, collaboration and interaction.

Practice

In the model, the early childhood centre administrator's practice is credentialed certification/evaluation process. The Early childhood centre administrator Work Description forms the basis for defining the practice component of the core of knowledge. This work description forms the basis for evaluation of the administrator's practice by early childhood practice through a certification of practice process.

Post Secondary Early Childhood Studies Programs

In the model, through their core through a course content for early chilhood centre administrators, post secondary early childhood studies programs credential the theoretical core of knowledge that an early childhood administrator must possess in order to receive an early childhood centre administrator credential.

Licensing Standards

The second level of standardization in the model is licensing standards. There are two components to this level of standardization, licensing of individual practitioners and licensing the facilities in which they practice. Licensing authority is shared, with the child care professional licensing body licensing the individual child care practitioner and the facilities licensing body licensing the child care service.

Individual Practitioner

In the model, the authority to classify and license the early childhood administrator restswith the child care professional licensing body. A registry includes a classification system based on a career structure. One classification within that structure is the early childhood centre administrator. Based on the certification and education and practice components to the core of knowledge, the early childhood centre administrator is credentialed by the child care professional licensing body, ensuring that she demonstrates integrity and honest best practicies in her role. Child Careprofessional licensing bodies license child care practitioners through the administration of a child care practitioners Act.

Facilities

In the model, minimum standards for the position of early childhood centre administrator in a facilities act relate to the classification required for the position, not the standards within the classification as determined by the child care professional Licensing body.The facilities act would not define the classification, only state that when there are X number of teachers, and children, there should be a person classified as an administrator by the professional licensing body who manages the centre.

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